

[There are numerous anecdotes]

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There are numerous anecdotes about George Day. He was inclined to be a little of a show-off in front of anyone. One morning a short time after George had married a woman named Matilda they had company at their house for breakfast. George had done what chores he could do around the farm and then came in to eat breakfast with everyone there. Thinking he'd impress the visitors with the qualities of his new wife he rubbed his hands together and loudly asked, "'ell, (well) "Mat" what's ye goin, to hev fer brekstis? 'ittle mess a bixsticks? Horr'oop, git 'em in a oob'n." (Hurry up, get 'em in the oven.) Another time he went a little farther in his bragging. Several men were gathered around talking and George tried to get into the conversation several times without success. Finally the general subject of conversation turned to daring encounters in which many of the men had good stories in which they came out winner. George controlled himself with difficulty and finally burst out in the midst of another brave story. He pulled himself up to his greatest height, expanded to his mental size and fearlessly announced, "Aw, ah kin lick eny man a goin'. Three axe han'les - one in each han' - ba [gessht?!]" If anyone has ever wielded an axe handle they know the appropriateness of George's weapon and the wisdom of his choice. They are easy to grasp being narrow enough to fit conveniently into the hand and the end upon which the axe is fitted, is wide and heavy, making it easy to wield and dangerous. George however was going to outdo any man by having the axe handles to use simultaneously. The fact that he was exaggerating to impossibility probably didn't faze George if the statement sounded imposing. Someone is always overhearing remarks

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that George makes. If one knows him they can 2 the more readily appreciate the humour of the things he says. The country store loungers have this one to tell. George came noisily into the store one morning and said, "ell, a guess ah'll git me 'ittle bit a g'oceries. Ah want a poun' a nails - a plug a perbaccy, (tobacco) - an' en axe han'le. Guess 'at 'll do fer a 'pell! (spell)" George may have been justified in calling the articles he [taught?] groceries because the general store in the part of the town where he purchased them is known as the "grocery store". The incident however touched the vague sense of humor of the townspeople and the value of the conversation lies in the fun the folks get in retelling it. [? ?]

Years ago when there were more sheep in the town than at present, George and a friend of his, gained themselves a questionable reputation in some of their business dealings. They of course raised sheep on the Day farm so that they were able to carry on for some time before they were found out. Gradually neighbors and relatives missed their sheep and to their practised country eyes there were no evidences of a marauding animal. Even Grandfather Luther Day missed an occasional sheep. It was all very mystifying. One sheep from several flocks within a close radius would be missing every once in a while and no trace was ever found of them. To the frugal farmers, this small but steady loss called for quick and quiet action. Each farm head took it upon himself to see that all of his flocks were watched closely until something definite could be seen. Soon it became known that the sheep thief or thieves was someone connected with them or who knew their habits and farms well. When a "watch" was on, no sheep were lost but any relaxation of their guard duty brought them that slight loss. In family circles suspicions rose 3 and old friends talked about the sheep stealing surreptitiously, watching those with whom they were less friendly, closely. It was a sad state for a neighborly little hamlet. Finally as time went on and they were not discovered, George and his friend became more careless with their pilfering. The friend seemed to have engineered the plot in the first place and George was wily enough to manage the skaling of the animals. They slaughtered them together in some place known to themselves and where they could easily dispose of the

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traces of the killing. Not handling too many at one time, they were able to finish that part of their work soon and avoid suspicion. One or two sheep covered over in the big wagon which George drove to North Adams several times in a month roused no suspicion. They dressed the sheep while on the way to town in the wagon and then sold them when they arrived. It was a fine system but as was mentioned before the perfection of their plans and their long continued success made them careless. Gossip became more open as neighbors found a common topic. Their suspicions grew and soon Georges friend, who was more alert then he, realized that they couldn't continue with their "work". Knowing too that if George were caught he would exonerate himself and place all the blame on him, the fellow decided that the two of them would have to leave town. Without arousing anyone, the next time they went to North Adams, they didn't return. Everyone knew their guilt then, but as long as they weren't bothering any more there was no sense in wasting time chasing them only to have to pay for their board if they sentenced them to a jail term. The respect which the townspeople felt for Luther Day stood him in good stead now. They were sorry for him which of course didn't suit Luther. He became bitter and not a little reticent. George however fared quite well. The two of them had made enough money on the sheep business to take care of them for some time. George may have got the worst of the bargain being somewhat on the less orainy side but at any rate he had enough to keep him. He was away from home for twenty-five years or more in which time he went West - perhaps with his friend and perhaps not. Recently a wealthy man appeared in the news items. He is visiting and may take up residence having a particular fondness for the place as he once lived here when he was younger. Present day townspeople do not know him but talk to any old timer and he will say, "Ets ben [quite?] a spell sence eny one's heard of 'em. Folks now'days don't recall'em but I reckon I could tell a thing or two. They sure was slick ones. Now this one comes back like nothin' never happened and is fixin' to settle some'eres here. 'Course Luther's grandson, he didn't know no diffunt unless someone tol' him - he came back quite a spell ago and now one raised any fuss. T'want no use to cry over spilt milk and 'sides that they want but a few who didn't think the other feller was the most ta blame fer he he'd the brains." George is getting to be a rather old man himself

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now. He spends most of his time in North Adams perhaps because he has the feeling the place is a little more friendly to him. As has been mentioned the old Day has little to its credit now because of the neglect it has known. George had no children to whom he might leave the place and not being a business man he didn't care to keep up the farm to make money or even to rent it to someone else to run.

There is one other anecdote told about George that has quite a little humor in it. It happened while George and Matilda were living together - before George took his trip to the West to escape consequences for sheep stealing. Small boys having heard their folks discuss George's "peculiarities" and noted them for themselves were always eager to play some trick on him. It was generally one calculated to take place after they had retired to some safe, distant vantage point. George was clumsy at running out he was powerful and had a nasty temper and the youngsters realized this. This day Fate gave them a perfect opening. George and Matilda were having a "scrap". The boys could tell without too much detective work, for the couple didn't lower their voices. They knew too when George hitched up the mare and went down town that it would probably be more exciting when he came back. They would know whether he had been drinking when he came thru the covered bridge. Anyone in their right mind would come thru that old covered wooden bridge in some orderly fashion and George would too except when under the influence of "spirits." But when George came thru that bridge and was feeling particularly exuberant, his team or the mare whichever he was driving, was, as one old fellow expressed it - "right out straight an' hell bent fer leather." It seemed to be the "turn" that George's drinking would take - to race his horses home. The day mentioned, George, came home in just such a manner. The bridge announced his coming long before he raced into the farm yard. Careening into the road he gave himself time enough to get out of the wagon and start toward the house before he and "Mat" were yelling at one another again. The mischievous little scamps waited until the noise of battle was issuing from distant corner of the farm house and then they crept up to George's steaming mare, unhitched her and while some of them were putting her in the barn 6 others were dragging a large saw-horse (used to

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lay long sticks of wood on when one person is sawing the stick mostly) out and hitching and harnessing it in the horse's pace. They had finished their work when the sounds of the Day fight began to come from the direction of the kitchen again. This was the main exit and entrance to the house. The argument became more and more heated. Then George blustered and stumbled out of the door way and into his wagon which took some time to negotiate. When he finally was standing upright in the wagon he turned to deliver his last remark to his wife. "I'll put da states between yerself an' meself an' at aint no 'ittle'bit." Stooping down with finality to pick up the reins he said "Giddap, Johanna!" to what he supposed was his mare and promptly went right over backwards as the slack reins in his hands tipped the saw horse upward. What happened after that isn't known. The boys didn't stay to see any further. It might not have proved healthy for them to remain too long. The fall may have jarred some of the liquor effects out of George or Matilda might have been frightened and come to his aid thus bringing about a reconciliation - at any rate George didn't leave rightaway and the mare was spared the journey across the continent as George planned.

There are many relatives of the Day line, some of them proud enough to want to disclaim any knowledge or relationship with our George Day but most of them have a humorous regard for him and his deeds and their attitude is "it takes good and the bad - and it can happen in the best of families." Townspeople have all but forgotten to talk about him in their enthusiastic gossip about present day "characters". Those who have lived in the town all their lives know everyone else and feel it their right to know all, about another person. However George is an odd old man now and isn't worth too much discussion. In an all day visiting session or with a convalescent's entertainment these old stories come into the conversation. But who wants to talk about an old man who stole sheep when the neighbors son or daughter is "kickin' up pretty wild" and gives one something to "stew over".